**Sunrise Strategies**

**Visions, scenarios and strategies for the CPWF NBDC beyond 2013**

**On to a good thing – can’t stop now!**

**1. Introduction**

During the NBDC Reflection Meeting 22-23 May 2012 the NBDC team was able to identify the core thrust of the NBDC as it has emerged over the past two years. The Programme is committed to ensuring contribution to development outcomes (identified in the OLMs and still pertinent and prioritized) takes place over the coming 18 months of the programme. It recognizes the enormous potential this coherent body of R4D presents in the mid to longer term in addressing the complex livelihoods, NRM and poverty challenges faced by populations across the Nile Basin. Evolving from a loosely linked set of projects the NBDC is increasingly framed as a single programme with ambitions to inform and facilitate decision makers and planners at all levels, whether farmers, community leaders, woreda directors, or international organisations and government bodies …

The NBDC post 2013 vision builds on the successes, lessons and results emerging from a specific approach to addressing development challenges such as seasonal water scarcity, low system productivity, deteriorating ecosystem services and upstream-downstream tension facing the Nile Basin for many years. This success has been achieved through the provision of primary objective data, capacity building and the wide range of stakeholder engagement.

**2. The vision**

Thriving livelihoods of all populations across the Nile Basin are sustained by resilient ecosystems, enabled by pro-poor natural resource management that is locally-led and is linked to and integrated with informed innovation platforms at multiple scales.

Revitalizing the ecosystem services of the basin for improved livelihoods and resilient systems through multi scale innovations, and think-tank groups, including functional regional innovation platforms. It is primarily through the use of de-centralised planning and implementation, as promoted by innovation platforms, that, we believe, ownership, sustainability and, tailor made solutions to natural resource management will be achieved.

**3. The content**

It is important that the adaptive capacity of communities and the responsiveness of institutions to facilitate action in NRM are integrated into the development and policy arena. The framework outlined here intends to address the weak institutional linkages, sectoral policies and fragmented investments, which deter cross-institutional learning, local action and policy implementation.

The strategy is to establish a proactive hub for governmental institutions, NGOs, donors, private sector and civil societies to develop collective action and facilitate a national movement on NRM for CRGE, starting from within Ethiopia and expanding it to riparian countries and other key players (taking a basin-wide perspective). The strategy builds on the already established local and regional/national platforms in the NBDC – continuing to learn from and strengthen these, by making clear linkages between levels, but also by establishing linkages with policy makers and by creating a web-portal for documenting and exchange of lessons learned.

The strategy integrates the core elements of the current NBDC program, i.e. activities and facilitation from local innovation platforms and regional/national platforms, as well as capacity building, documenting/lesson learning and communication; the scenario building – strategy option work; basin level tools informed by models populated with quality, evolving data sets, etc. The wide range of players in NRM are expected to share their research findings though the Innovation Platforms and associated networks.

The Innovation Platform, as one of the key strategies, will capitalize on the on-going biophysical and socio-economic research undertaken at specific sites (landscape scale) as well as at basin scale and broaden its horizons to address concern of regional interest.

The objectives of the institutional and policy action hub have been formulated as: (a) stimulate sharing and learning, (b) guide evidence-based policy formulation, (c) enhance effective coordination, (d) address institutional and policy constraints, (e) build institutional capacity, and (f) scale out and up best practices.

Although the strategy will have a strong development and policy character, (action) research has an important role to play in term of research on governance and institutions, but also to ensure evidence based planning (which will depend on learning from good practices).

The initiative would also function as an umbrella for other work being conducted in CRP5 and CRP1.2 (and/or other CRPs and NRM initiatives in the basin). It provides the ‘software/org-ware’ and a platform for the more science-based activities and projects in the programmes (the so-called hardware). In this sense there is a mutual benefit of the platform for the CRPS programs, as it will link research to development and policy, while it enforces evidence based policy/decision making. This initiative will be used as a nucleus to establish a regional think-thank group that would serve as a neutral mediator on basin issues of interest of riparian countries but will also identify key benefit sharing mechanisms for joint investment.

Although initially with a strong Ethiopian focus, the programme will develop as a network with international dimensions and provide a regional (inclusive) platform (especially in relation to the Nile Basin, with upstream/downstream effects and consequences).

**4. The Frame**

* Livelihoods driven
* Active integration of land, water and ecosystem services
* Basin wide – taking in the whole basin and consequently consequences of transboundary politics, institutional arrangements, climate change, etc.
* Multi and inter-scale, integrating and linking across the scales
* Pertinence and integration of multiple drivers (e.g. climate change, population, economic policy …)

**5. Internal opportunities**

Expand tried and tested tools and models to include a greater component of poverty analysis and facilitating impact

**6. External opportunities and relevance**

* Context of increasing investment in hydropower – and imperative to address the water-energy-food nexus across the Basin
* Increasing recognition and call for strategies and action that is climate resilient and sustains a green economy
* Decision maker and donor recognition, e.g. DFID pro-actively approaching the NBDC to support Innovation Platforms, Africa-wide interest in developing models and tools that will inform basin scale policy and targeted investment strategies combining complex and diverse data set, ex-ante impact assessment and scenarios. FAO is keen to use the platform to reach policy makers on water resources management.

**7. How**

* Innovation research-for-development
* Multi and inter-scale
* Participatory
* Inter-disciplinary
* Strong role for C4D
* Science-informed

**8. Strategies – options – choices**

1. Maintain the coherence of the NBDC and avoid “aligning” the projects onto different CRPs and within CRP5 different SRPs. (Additional possibility: to integrate NBDC sites with CRP5 sentinel sites; as N4 modelling work takes on a wider basin perspective to utilise it within the planned CRP5 Intelligence Unit)
2. Strengthen and compliment CRPs, specifically CRP5 (Basins SRP) and CRP1.2, drawing on CRP science content in addition to on-going biophysical and socio-economic data and analysis emerging from the NBDC.
3. Funding opportunities – current proposal with DFID; draft proposal for IFAD covering Nile, Limpopo and Volta in preparation
4. Linking to and integration with Africa RISING Programme (USAID Feed the Future)
5. Establishment of a regional think tank/honest broker engaging primarily with national, regional and international decision makers. Providing research rich credible evidence, linking a broad range of key stakeholders to decision makers, encouraging action based dialogue.